

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment is filed in order to facilitate processing and is filed in response to the Office Action dated September 13, 2004 in which the Examiner rejected claims 9-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

As indicated above, claims 9, 11 and 21 have been amended to make explicit what is implicit in the claims. The amendments are unrelated to a statutory requirement for patentability and do not narrow the literal scope of the claims.

Claim 9 claims a computer program for supporting manual preparatory operations for bringing a mail production apparatus into an operating condition required prior to production of a mail piece or series of mail pieces and claims 11 and 21 claim a mail production apparatus for producing mail pieces. The computer program and mail production apparatus includes a control structure having code for determining data regarding an operating condition of the mail production apparatus or finishing assembly required prior to the production of the mail, the data representing at least one physical property of the required operation condition, registering at least one current physical property of a current operating condition of the mail apparatus or finishing assembly, determining a manual change to be made, causing an indication of the manual change to be represented and after making the manual change causing the mail to be composed. Thus, the claimed invention provides a computer program or mail production apparatus which allows an operator to see what needs to be done in order to bring the mail apparatus into a required condition in order to produce a mail piece. The prior art does not show, teach or suggest the invention as claimed in claims 9, 11 and 21.

Claims 9-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over *Anderson, Jr. et al* (U.S. Patent No. 6,119,051).

Anderson, Jr. et al appears to disclose a client-server system, method, and computer program for managing database driven insertion (DDI) and mail piece tracking (MPT) data for holding and managing mailroom data in a consistent and easy to use manner. (col. 1, lines 18-22) Utilizing a client-server concept allows an interface to be developed for client programs to be able to read database driven insertion (DDI) data from the database and write mail piece tracking data back to the database. Database driven insertion (DDI) is currently being accomplished in conventional mail processing by storing mail processing instructions in a flat ASCII file, reading an account number from paper via a laser scanner, calculating the offset of the data in the file that corresponded to the account number read, and reading the data at that offset point into the mail processing equipment. Mail piece tracking has been accomplished by storing information about a mailpiece back into the database driven insertion (DDI) file, or possibly a separate file whenever the mailpiece processing was complete. (col. 1, lines 32-47) A novel client-server system, method, and computer program for managing database driven insertion (DDI) and mail piece tracking (MPT) data for holding and managing mailroom data in a consistent and easy to use manner is provided. "Managing" of data refers to a system that controls, utilizes, tracks, and reports on all aspects of database driven insertion and mail piece tracking data. By the client/server database architecture for managing database driven insertion and mailpiece tracking in a mail processing environment according this invention, a customer initially sets up a mail processing site by defining within the client/server architecture running database driven insertion

and mail piece tracking system parameters such as Users, Privileges, JobSetups, Materials, etc., before any actual mail processing occurs. Next, the customer generates data (generally in a mainframe environment) that is intended to be printed and mailed. The data is run through a utility like Bell & Howell's Transformer™ or their own custom software to create a "side file" that contains the database driven insertion information required by a mail processing insertion device. Each print run has a matching side file generated for it. Material is printed and the side file is loaded/inducted into the database driven insertion and mail piece tracking system. The customer physically conveys the printed material to the inserter, loads the mail processing job currently programmed, places the materials called for by the mail processing job (e.g., inserts, printed materials, envelopes, etc . . .) into the correct locations, and begins running the mail processing job. As a mail processing inserter reads each reader code or key that has been strategically placed on the mailpiece materials, the inserter makes a request for the database driven insertion data associated with that particular key from the database. The database sends the insertion data back to the inserter, which uses the data to determine what actions to perform on this particular account. As each mailpiece leaves the inserter, mail piece tracking data is written into the database associated with each database driven insertion record that records, for instance, the Machine, Operators, Time, Date, JobSetup, Inserts Fed, etc., for each mailpiece. (col. 2, line 34 through col. 3, line 7)

Thus, *Anderson, Jr. et al* merely discloses having a customer set up a mail processing site, generate data to be printed and mailed, including creating a file that contains a database driven insertion information required by a mail processing insertion device, conveying the printed material to the inserter, running the job and

automatically updating the database. Nothing in *Anderson, Jr. et al* shows, teaches or suggests determining a manual change to be made between current and required physical properties of the mail production apparatus before assembly of the mail pieces is started as claimed in claims 9, 11 and 21. Rather, *Anderson, Jr. et al* merely discloses updating mail piece tracking data as the mail processing insertion device assembles the printed materials.

Since nothing in *Anderson, Jr. et al* shows, teaches or suggests determining a manual change to be made between current and required physical properties in the mail production apparatus prior to preparing of the mail pieces as claimed in claims 9, 11 and 21, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 9, 11 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 10 and 12-20 depend from claims 9 and 11 and recite additional features. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 10 and 12-20 would not have been obvious within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §103 over *Anderson, Jr. et al* at least for the reasons as set forth above. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraws the rejection to claims 10 and 12-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Thus it now appears that the application is in condition for reconsideration and allowance. Reconsideration and allowance at an early date are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that the application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact, by telephone, the applicant's undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

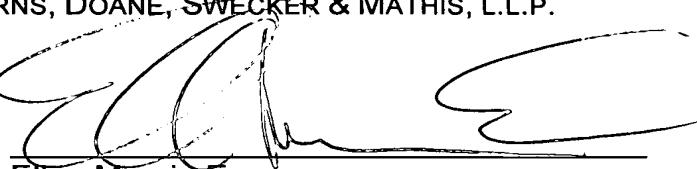
In the event that this paper is not timely filed within the currently set shortened statutory period, applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such extension of time may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 02-4800.

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Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

By:



Ellen Marcie Emas
Registration No. 32,131

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P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620